

Message Text

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ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 AF-06 EUR-12 ISO-00 IO-10 SAM-01 ACDA-05

CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-02 INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05

PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 NEAE-00 /091 W

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P R 281810Z OCT 75

FM AMEMBASSY RABAT

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 6834

INFO AMEMBASSY ALGIERS

AMEMBASSY DAKAR

AMEMBASSY MADRID

AMEMBASSY NOUAKCHOTT

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY TRIPOLI

AMEMBASSY TUNIS

USMISSION USUN PRIORITY

USCINCEUR VAIHINGEN GERMANY

CINCUSNAVEUR LONDON

FOSIF ROTA

COMSIXTHFLT

AMEMBASSY JIDDA

C O N F I D E N T I A L RABAT 5202

USCINCEUR AND CINCUSNAVEUR ALSO FOR POLADS

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR PBOR MO SS SP MR AG

SUBJECT: SAHARA ROUNDUP

1. DIPLOMATIC ACTIVITY CONTINUES APACE. LATEST DEVELOPMENT
IN HIGH-PACED DIPLOMATIC SCENE WAS OCTOBER 28 TRIP TO
MADRID BY FONMIN LARAKI AND GIRM FONMIN OULD MOUKNASS.
OULD MOUKNASS HAD ARRIVED IN MARRAKECH OCT 27 CARRYING
MESSAGE FROM MAURITANIAN PRESIDENT FOR KING.

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2. IN COURSE OF OCT 27 INTERVIEW WITH NBC-TV KING

WAS ASKED WHETHER US HAD PLAYED MEDIATION ROLE BETWEEN MOROCCO AND SPAIN. KING REPLIED THAT "US HAS FOUND ITSELF SOMEWHAT SANDWICHED BETWEEN MOROCCO AND SPAIN." HE CONTINUED, "US ROLE HAS BEEN THAT OF A FRIEND PUSHING MOROCCO AND SPAIN TOWARD A PEACEFUL SOLUTION THROUGH DIALOGUE."

3. MARCH PREPARATIONS. GOM CONTINUES TO INSIST THAT MARCH WILL GO FORWARD. IN OCT 27 INTERVIEW WITH FRENCH TELEVISION KING WAS ASKED WHETHER THE MARCH WOULD STILL TAKE PLACE. HE ANSWERED THAT IT WOULD WHETHER OR NOT ACCORD ON SAHARA ARRIVED AT.

4. AS OF NOON OCT 27 GOM WAS CLAIMING THAT 145,000 VOLUNTEERS WERE ALREADY AT THE BORDER. RABAT'S CONTINGENT, WHICH IS SUPPOSED TO BE THE LAST OF ALL BUT THE SOUTHERNMOST PROVINCES, LEFT TODAY WITH GREAT FANFARE AND SEEMINGLY EFFECTIVE ORGANIZATION.

5. DELEGATION OF SAUDI VOLUNTEER MARCHERS HEADED BY SHEIKH ABDULLAH OTHAYMINE CEREMONIOUSLY RECEIVED IN MARRAKECH OCT 27.

6. BEGIN COMMENT: CONVERGENCE OF FONMIN LARAKI AND OULD MOUKNASS ON MADRID WOULD SEEM TO INDICATE CLOSE MOROCCAN-MAURITANIAN COORDINATION IN NEGOTIATIONS WITH SPAIN.

7. KING'S REMARKS ON US, WHICH CARRIED PROMINENTLY IN BOTH MORNING AND AFTERNOON SEMI-OFFICIAL PRESS, SEEM HELPFUL IN PLACING US ROLE IN POSITIVE LIGHT BUT WELL SHORT OF THAT OF MEDIATION. DESPITE OUR DENIALS, SPECULATION HAS CONTINUED IN LOCAL CIRCLES THAT, IN COURSE OF RECENT VISIT OF ASST. SECRETARY AHERTON, US MIGHT HAVE PLAYED MORE DIRECT AND ACTIVE ROLE.

8. GOM CONTINUES TO KEEP KICKOFF DATE OF MARCH VAGUE, PRESUMABLY TO MAINTAIN PSYCHOLOGICAL PRESSURES ON SPANISH. END COMMENT.

9. PUBLIC SUPPORT FOR MARCH. WHATEVER MOTIVES ONE WISHES TO ATTRIBUTE TO THE RESPONSE OF THE MOROCCAN PEOPLE TO THE CONFIDENTIAL

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KING'S CALL FOR A PEACEFUL MARCH, THE NATION HAS -- BY ANY STANDARD -- MOBILIZED ITS HUMAN AND LOGISTICAL RESOURCES IMPRESSIVELY. THOUSANDS OF PEOPLE HAVE BECOME INVOLVED IN SOME FACET OF THE CAMPAIGN, WHETHER THEY ARE MARCHERS OR NOT (THERE IS ONE RUMOR CIRCULATING THAT MARCHER'S CARDS ARE ACTUALLY BEING SCALPED). VIRTUALLY EVERY PROFESSIONAL AND SOCIAL ORGANIZATION IN THE NATION HAS REGISTERED ITS SUPPORT FOR THE MARCH; IF THERE ARE ANY WHO HAVEN'T, THEY HAVE YET TO

BE HEARD FROM. THE ISSUE HAS PURELY AND SIMPLY CARRIED
OVERPOWERING APPEAL AND HAS PROVIDED THE PEOPLE WITH AN
UNPRECEDENTED CHANCE TO PARTICIPATE PERSONALLY IN WHAT HAS
BECOME A TRULY NATIONAL UNDERTAKING. WHETHER OR NOT GOM
LOGISTICAL PREPARATIONS WILL BE UP TO THE BURDENS PLACED ON
THEM AS MARCHERS CONTINUE TO GATHER IN THE HASTILY PREPARED
CAMPS REMAINS TO BE SEEN. ALSO QUESTIONABLE IS QUALITY OF
LOGISTICAL PREPARATIONS IF AND WHEN MARCHERS GET UNDERWAY IN
EXTREMELY INHOSPITABLE CLIMATE.

10. COMMENT: THE POLITICAL EFFECTS OF THIS CAMPAIGN -- REGARDLESS OF
THE OUTCOME -- WILL HAVE LONG-TERM IMPACT ON THE MOROCCAN
POLITICAL SCENE. AT THE MOMENT, IT IS OF COURSE THE KING WHO
STANDS TO PROFIT MOST, BUT IT HAS ALSO BEEN HE WHO HAS STOOD
TO LOSE THE MOST.
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